



Linda McCulloch, Superintendent
 Montana Office of Public Instruction
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MontCAS Montana Comprehensive Assessment System July 2007 Newsletter

2007-2008 MontCAS Testing Schedule

October 23- November 23, 2007	English Language Proficiency Assessment for students identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) in grades K-12.
February 11 – March 26, 2008	CRT-Alternate, Grades 3-8 and 10, Reading and Math (It is recommended that the first week of this window be used for training, becoming familiar with the materials, and organizing the testing.)
March 3 – March 26, 2008	CRT, Grades 3-8 and 10, Reading and Math; Grades 4, 8, and 10 in Science



SAVE THE DATES
February 4–5, 2008 and April 28-29, 2008

New This Year: Test Administrator Training Conference February 4-5, 2008

The Office of Public Instruction assessment staff will host a training conference in Helena at the Red Lion Colonial February 4 and 5, 2008. The conference is a response to suggestions and requests from system and school test coordinators, special education directors, teachers administering the test with accommodations, and teachers administering the CRT-Alternate. All phases of test administration will be covered including materials, accommodations, test security, and the CRT-Alternate. A block of rooms at special rates will be available. Breakfast and lunch both days and renewal units will be provided. Details, including registration information, will be available in September.

OPI State Assessment Conference

April 28-29, 2008

Call for proposals and registration will be online in the Fall of 2007.

If you would like to serve on the program committee, please contact Judy Snow, 406-444-3656 or jsnow@mt.gov



Testing Contractor Contact Information

MontCAS, Phase 2, the CRT and the CRT-Alternate—Measured Progress, Inc.

Dan Verdick, Montana CRT Program Manager

dverdick@measuredprogress.org or 800-431-8901 x2220

Nancy Hall, Montana CRT Program Assistant

nhall@measuredprogress.org or 888-792-2741

Jake Goldsmith, Montana CRT-Alternate Program Manager

JGoldsmith@measuredprogress.org or 800-431-8901 x2239

Niki Carr, Montana CRT-Alternate Program Assistant

ncarr@measuredprogress.org or 800-431-8901x2238

MontCAS, the English Language Proficiency (ELP)—Questar Assessment Inc.

Pamela Demarest, Program Manager

pdemarest@tasa.com or 845-277-8100

Test Coordinator Information

If your system has a new test coordinator, please contact the Office of Public Instruction assessment staff with updated test coordinator information. Please provide the test coordinator's name, email address, phone number, shipping address, and mailing address. OPI contact information is at the end of this newsletter.

MontCAS Phase 1

Iowa Tests Not Required

The Iowa Tests are no longer required for Montana systems and schools. The last administration was in Spring 2007.

As reported in the April 2007 OPI assessment newsletter, *JUMP*, "The contract with Riverside Publishing Company for the Iowa Tests in grades 4, 8, and 11 expires at the end of the spring 2007 testing year."

At its May 2007 meeting, the Board of Public Education voted to discontinue the required use of the Iowa Tests. The minutes were approved at the July 2007 Board of Public Education meeting. The minutes referring to the vote are below.

Item 22b FUTURE OF NORM REFERENCED TESTING

This item directly refers to discussion item 14 on May 10, 2007 BPE agenda. Dr. Kirk Miller stated that State Superintendent Linda McCulloch recommended to the Board of Public Education in January 2007 to discontinue the requirement of reporting the Norm-Referenced Test. The use of the NRT has been valuable;

however the tools that have become available to assess the needs of Montana's students and direct instruction are changing. The Board of Public Education believes that it is time to modernize the way that assessment is approached in Montana.

MOTION: Dr. Kirk Miller moved to discontinue the required use of the ITBS/ITED for state reporting purposes and establish with the Office of Public Instruction the task force to: 1) recommend assessments that will inform instruction to be available to all Montana schools; and 2) recommend revisions to Administrative Rule of Montana 10-55-603 to reflect these assessment recommendations. Ms. Sharon Carroll seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

MontCAS Phase 2

2007 CRT and CRT-Alternate Reports

- ✚ The window for reviewing CRT and CRT-Alternate preliminary summary and roster reports ended on July 6. Reported discrepancies on wrong grades, wrong schools, or students missing from the reports will be corrected. The final reports will be posted on the *iAnalyze* site on August 1, 2007. To view the reports, please follow the special directions posted online http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/CRT/07PrelimCRT_CRTAltRptsIAnalyze.pdf
- ✚ Paper parent reports and labels were shipped from Measured Progress to systems on June 29, 2007.



2007 CRT Released Items Are Online

The 2007 Reading and Math released items for grades 3-8 and 10 are now online. Fifty percent of the 2007 items in grades 4, 8, and 10 are released. One-hundred percent of the 2007 items in grades 3, 5, 6, and 7 are released.

The link to the items is <http://www.opi.mt.gov/Assessment/Phase2.html#RI>

The released item information is in the following files:

- ✚ Excel files, one for each grade and content area. These contain answer keys and keys to the standard assessment by the item.
- ✚ Multiple choice items for each grade. Both Reading and Math are included in one file for each grade.
- ✚ Constructed response rubrics, scoring guides, and model answers. Files are by grade and content area.

Special Education Teachers Needed to Beta Test the Science CRT-Alternate



Development of the CRT-Alternate in science is progressing with a Beta Test planned for September. The schedule for the Beta Test Administration Training and the Beta Test window is:

September 18, 2007

Beta Test Administration Training in Helena

September 19-October 9, 2007

Beta Test Administration Window

Many teachers are needed to participate in the Beta Test for each of the three grades: 4, 8, and 10. Each teacher will Beta Test a portion of a grade level test with an appropriate student. The Beta Test is crucial in the development of the Science CRT-Alternate that will be administered in the Spring of 2008. Input from the Beta Test will be used in the final development stages of the CRT-Alternate.

A participation form is online. Please fax it to the number on the form, and indicate on the form that you are interested in participating in the beta test. We hope to hear from you soon.

The link to the form is

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/Forms/06AppParticipate.pdf>

If you prefer, you may register online with Measured Progress.

<http://iregister.measuredprogress.org/>



Released Item/iAnalyze Training

The Office of Public Instruction Assessment Office continues to offer training on the use of CRT released items and the online data program *iAnalyze*.

A form to request training is online:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/Forms/06TrainRqst.pdf>

If your system is interested in OPI provided training, please print the form and fax it to Karen Richem, 406-444-1373.

Other Assessment Information




English Language Proficiency (ELP) Assessment

The Office of Public Instruction is pleased to announce that the results from the 2006-07 ELP are complete and should be received about July 13. In addition, the *Score Reports Interpretation Guide* (SRIG) has been posted to the OPI website at:

<http://www.opi.mt.gov/PDF/Assessment/ELP/07ELPInterpGuide.pdf>

A copy of the *Guide* will also be mailed to systems with the reports. We encourage you to review the *Guide* at your convenience.

Other ELP News:

-  The Office of Public Instruction will be developing a definition of "proficient" for the state that will be disseminated to districts before the next administration of the ELP assessment.
-  The testing window for the 2007-08 ELP is October 23 – November 23, 2007.
-  OPI is working on details for the number of materials, bar code labels, and training.

- Materials will be shipped around October 1, 2008. In order to help determine the number of materials, OPI mailed a letter to systems that participated in the 2006-2007 ELP. In that letter were two tables. One table indicated the number of students by grade that had participated in 2006-07. The second table moved those numbers up a grade and asked the system to contact OPI if the numbers did not seem reasonable. OPI and Questar will use that information to determine the number of materials to send per system and school. Please contact Karen Richem if you anticipate significant changes to those numbers.
- A barcode label will be printed for all students identified as LEP in the Spring 2007 AIM system. Barcode labels will be organized by system, school, grade, and alphabetical order. Please watch for details about the barcode labels and information that the school will need to provide on the answer document.
- OPI and Questar are developing training for the ELP. It will include web-based training and regional training.

If you have any questions or concerns, contact Karen Richem by phone (406)444-0748 or by email krichem@mt.gov.

OPI Assessment Contacts

- ✚ Karen Richem, Assessment Specialist, krichem@mt.gov, 406-444-0748
- ✚ Judy Snow, State Assessment Director, jsnow@mt.gov, 406-444-3656

